

# The Reddish Family Practices

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## ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

The Practice takes it very seriously if a member of staff or one of the doctors or nursing team is treated in an abusive or violent way.

The Practice supports the government's 'Zero Tolerance' campaign for Health Service Staff. This states that GPs and their staff have a right to care for others without fear of being attacked or abused. To successfully provide these services a mutual respect between all the staff and patients has to be in place. All our staff aim to be polite, helpful, and sensitive to all patients' individual needs and circumstances. They would respectfully remind patients that very often staff could be confronted with a multitude of varying and sometimes difficult tasks and situations, all at the same time. The staff understand that ill patients do not always act in a reasonable manner and will take this into consideration when trying to deal with a misunderstanding or complaint.

However, aggressive behaviour, be it violent or abusive, will not be tolerated and may result in you being removed from the Practice list and, in extreme cases, the Police being contacted.

In order for the practice to maintain good relations with their patients the practice would like to ask all its patients to read and take note of the occasional types of behaviour that would be found unacceptable:

- Using bad language or swearing at practice staff
- Any physical violence towards any member of the Primary Health Care Team or other patients, such as pushing or shoving
- Verbal abuse towards the staff in any form including verbally insulting the staff
- Discrimination or abuse on account of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation will not be tolerated within this practice
- Persistent or unrealistic demands that cause stress to staff will not be accepted. Requests will be met wherever possible and explanations given when they cannot
- Causing damage/stealing from the Practice's premises, staff or patients
- Obtaining drugs and/or medical services fraudulently
- Expressing abusive opinions online via social media or whatever form.

We ask you to treat your GPs, and their staff, courteously at all times. This Practice considers aggressive behaviour to be any personal comments, abusive and/or aggressive comments, cursing and/or swearing, physical contact and aggressive gestures.

No abuse of staff / patients is acceptable whether verbal or physical. All abuse will be reported to the Operations Manager who will keep a log of all incidents.

All physical abuse of any of our staff is reported to the police. The patient will then be removed immediately from our list. If the police are not informed, the health authority will inform the patient of the need to register with a new doctor.

Any incident of verbal abuse whether in person or on the telephone is reported immediately to the Operations or Practice Manager and recorded in the logbook kept in the practice. If appropriate, the Manager will discuss the incident with one of the GPs and a formal letter will be sent to the patient. A copy will be kept with the medical records. Any response to the letter will be recorded in the logbook and the letter will be kept on file. The logbook can be reviewed weekly and discussed if necessary at the staff meeting.

If the patient's name appears twice in the logbook, a final letter will be written warning him/her that any further abusive behaviour will result in removal from the list. Depending on the abuse this may result in the patient being removed with 30 days notice on a second warning. On the third occasion, the patient will be removed immediately from the list and a letter will be sent to the patient confirming this.

If the patient wishes to appeal the decision they may do so by contacting the Practice Manager, or by following the practice Complaints Policy which also gives details of other options for patients should they wish to make a complaint about the care received.